

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 are pending in this application.

Claims 1-19 stand rejected.

Claims 1, 7, 9, 10, 16, and 18 are amended. Claim 10 is amended to depend from amended claim 7.

New claims 20 and 21 are added.

No new matter is added.

Applicant requested a suspension of action on this application at the time of filing RCE on May 17, 2004 for a period of three months according to 37 C.F.R. 1.103 (c). However, the Examiner issued an office action on July 13, 2004 without considering the suspension of action. During the telephone conference on July 23, 2004, the Examiner graciously agreed that the Examiner would process the next action non-final in case the Examiner issues another office action.

Claims 1-21 remain in the case.

Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of the claims in light of the following remarks.

Claim rejections 35 U.S.C. 103

Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 10 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 5,835,334 to McMillin et al ("McMillin") or in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as obvious over McMillin.

Claims 4 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over McMillin.

Claims 8, 9, and 11-17 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over McMillin in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,645,646 to Beinglass et al ("Beinglass").

Claim 19 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over McMillin and Beinglass in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,098,741 to Nolet et al ("Nolet")

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

Claim 1 is amended to recite,

“a heater defining a substantially horizontal planar upper heating surface; and
a ceramic plate having a substantially horizontal planar lower surface conforming to and supported by said heating surface but not fastened thereto, the ceramic plate substantially

entirely covering said upper heating surface, said ceramic plate including an upper supporting surface for supporting an object to be heated by heat conduction through said ceramic plate from said heater to such an object,

whereby said ceramic plate can be easily placed on and removed from said upper heating surface of said heater, *wherein said ceramic plate is solid and devoid of openings for passing fluid therethrough.*”

In contrast, in McMillin, the electrode cap 1 has various openings for passing fluid therethrough, contrary to the claimed invention. See FIGS. 1-4 of McMillin.

In addition, the Examiner has argued in the official action dated July 13, 2004 that “Further, most importantly, the very channels (6, 6a; Figure 1) within which McMillin’s coolant fluid is circulated are shown in Figure 1 to be cavities within one piece of McMillin’s apparatus, -item 1, Figure 1 of McMillin. As such, coolant [fluid] would not escape if McMillin operates his chuck with unfastened components.” See page 6, lines 7-10 of the official action.

However, as shown in figure 1 of McMillin, although the channels 6a may be shown as cavities within one piece (i.e., within the electrode cap 1), the channel 6 is not formed within the same piece but extends vertically in the lower electrode 2, which is a separate member from the electrode cap 1. If the electrode cap 1 and the lower electrode cap 2 were *not* fastened to each other as alleged by the Examiner, the coolant fluid would leak from the interface or gap between the channels 6a and the channel 6, thereby significantly disrupting the operation of McMillin device.

For these reasons, McMillin does not teach or suggest all of the limitations of the claimed invention. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable. Also, claims 2-8 and 10, which depend from claim 1, are allowable for their dependency and their own merits. For example, amended claim 7 now recites, “said ceramic plate is substantially made of ceramic material. In contrast, in McMillin, the electrodes are *merely coated* with insulator, e.g., aluminum metal coated with an anodized aluminum, thus *not* “substantially made of ceramic material” as recited in claim 7 of the present application. See col. 4, lines 23-27 of McMillin.

With respect to claim 9, which recites limitations similar to amended claim 1, it is patentable for the same or similar reasons discussed above in connection with claim 1. Also, claims 11-17, which depend from claim 9, are patentable at least for the reasons discussed above.

For the foregoing reasons, reconsideration and allowance of claims 1-21 of the application as amended is solicited. The Examiner is encouraged to telephone the

undersigned at (503) 222-3613 if it appears that an interview would be helpful in advancing the case.

Respectfully submitted,

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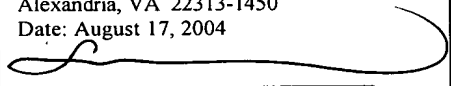


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Limited Recognition Under 37 CFR § 10.9(b)

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